



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**Eligibility Designations and Applications for Waiving
Eligibility Requirements; Programs under Parts A and F of
Title III and Programs under Title V of the Higher
Education Act of 1965, as Amended (HEA)**

AGENCY: Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education (Department).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department announces the process for designation of eligible institutions and invites applications for waivers of eligibility requirements for fiscal year (FY) 2021, for the following programs: 1. Programs authorized under title III, part A of the HEA: Strengthening Institutions Program (Part A SIP), Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions (Part A ANNH), Predominantly Black Institutions (Part A PBI), Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions (Part A NASNTI), and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (Part A AANAPISI). 2. Programs authorized under title III, part F of the HEA: Hispanic-Serving Institutions STEM and Articulation (Part F HSI STEM and Articulation), Predominantly Black Institutions (Part F PBI), Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions (Part F ANNH), Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions (Part F NASNTI),

and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (Part F AANAPISI). 3. Programs authorized under title V of the HEA: Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI) and Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans (PPOHA).

DATES:

Applications Available: [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Christopher Smith, Institutional Service, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, room 2B108, Washington, DC 20202. Telephone: (202) 453-7946 or (202) 262-7141. Email: Christopher.Smith@ed.gov; or Jason Cottrell, Institutional Service, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, room 2B127, Washington, DC 20202. Telephone: (202) 453-7530 or (202) 262-1833. Email: Jason.Cottrell@ed.gov.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call the Federal Relay Service (FRS), toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Programs: The Part A SIP, Part A ANNH, Part A PBI, Part A NASNTI, and Part A AANAPISI programs are

authorized under title III, part A of the HEA. The Part F HSI STEM and Articulation, Part F PBI, Part F ANNH, Part F NASNTI, and Part F AANAPISI programs are authorized under title III, part F of the HEA. The HSI and PPOHA programs are authorized under title V of the HEA. Please note that certain programs addressed in this notice have the same or similar names as other programs that are authorized under a different statutory authority. For this reason, we specify the statutory authority as part of the acronym for certain programs.

Under the programs discussed above, institutions are eligible to apply for grants if they meet specific statutory and regulatory eligibility requirements. An institution of higher education that is designated as an eligible institution may also receive a waiver of certain non-Federal cost-sharing requirements for one year under the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) program authorized by title IV, part A of the HEA and the Federal Work-Study (FWS) program authorized by section 443 of the HEA. Qualified (eligible) institutions may receive the FSEOG and FWS waivers for one year even if they do not receive a grant under a title III or V grant program. An applicant that receives a grant from the Student Support Services (SSS) program that is authorized under section 402D of the HEA, 20 U.S.C. 1070a-14, may receive a waiver of the required non-Federal cost share for

institutions for the duration of the grant. An applicant that receives a grant from the Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language (UISFL) program that is authorized under section 604 of the HEA, 20 U.S.C. 1124, may receive a waiver or reduction of the required non-Federal cost share for institutions for the duration of the grant.

Sections 312 and 502 of the HEA, 34 CFR 607.2-607.5, and 34 CFR 606.2-606.5 include most of the basic eligibility requirements for grant programs authorized under titles III and V of the HEA. Sections 312(b)(1)(B) and 502(a)(2)(A) of the HEA provide that, to be eligible for these programs, an institution of higher education's average "educational and general expenditures" (E&G) per full-time equivalent (FTE) undergraduate student must be less than the average E&G expenditures per FTE undergraduate student of institutions that offer similar instruction in that year.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) calculates Core Expenses per FTE of institutions, a statistic like E&G per FTE. Both E&G per FTE and Core Expenses per FTE are based on regular operational expenditures of institutions (excluding auxiliary enterprises, independent operations, and hospital expenses). They differ only in that E&G per FTE is based on fall undergraduate enrollment, while Core Expenses per

FTE is based on 12-month undergraduate enrollment for the academic year.

To avoid inconsistency in the data submitted to, and produced by, the Department, for the purpose of sections 312(b) (1) (B) and 502(a) (2) (A) of the HEA, E&G per FTE is calculated using the same methodology as Core Expenses per FTE. Accordingly, the Department will apply the NCES methodology for calculating Core Expenses per FTE.

Institutions requesting an eligibility exemption determination must use the Core Expenses per FTE data reported to NCES' Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) for the most currently available academic year, in this case academic year 2018-2019.

Special Note: To qualify as an eligible institution under the grant programs listed in this notice, your institution must satisfy several criteria. For most of these programs, these criteria include those that relate to the enrollment of needy students and to the Core Expenses per FTE student count for a specified base year. The most recent data available in IPEDS for Core Expenses per FTE are for base year 2018-2019. To award FY 2021 grants in a timely manner, we will use these data to evaluate eligibility.

Accordingly, each institution interested in either applying for a new grant under the title III or V programs addressed in this notice, or requesting a waiver of the non-Federal cost share, must be designated as an eligible

institution in FY 2021. Under the HEA, any institution interested in applying for a grant under any of these programs must first be designated as an eligible institution. (34 CFR 606.5 and 607.5).

Note: Please be advised that the list of institutions of higher education identified in the allocation table as eligible to receive an award under section 314(a)(2) of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSAA) only speaks to the eligibility of those institutions for the purposes of receiving funds under CRRSAA section 314(a)(2). The appearance of an institution on the section 314(a)(2) allocation table does not grant or otherwise indicate that the institution is currently eligible for funding under titles III, V, and VII of the HEA. An institution that seeks to meet the eligibility requirements for programs identified in this notice under titles III, V, and VII of the HEA must apply under the procedures contained in this notice.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS:

The eligibility requirements for the programs authorized under part A of title III of the HEA are in sections 312 and 317-320 of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1058, 1059d-1059g) and in 34 CFR 607.2 through 607.5. The regulations may be accessed at www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=bc12bf5d685021e069cd1a15352b381a&mc=true&node=pt34.3.607&rgn=div5. The eligibility requirements for the

programs authorized by part F of title III of the HEA are in section 371 of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1067q). There are currently no specific regulations for these programs.

The eligibility requirements for the title V HSI program are in part A of title V of the HEA and in 34 CFR 606.2 through 34 CFR 606.5. The regulations may be accessed at www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=bc12bf5d685021e069cd1a15352b381a&mc=true&node=pt34.3.606&rgn=div51.

The requirements for the PPOHA program are in part B of title V of the HEA and in the notice of final requirements published in the *Federal Register* on July 27, 2010 (75 FR 44055), and in 34 CFR 606.2(a) and (b), and 606.3 through 606.5.

The Department has instituted a process known as the Eligibility Matrix (EM), under which we will use information submitted by institutions to IPEDS to determine which institutions meet the basic eligibility requirements for the programs authorized by title III or V of the HEA listed above. We will use enrollment and fiscal data from the 2018-2019 year submitted by institutions to IPEDS to make eligibility determinations for FY 2021. Beginning February XX, 2021, an institution will be able to review the Department's decision on whether it is eligible for the grant programs authorized by title III or V of the HEA through this process by checking the institution's

eligibility in the eligibility system linked through the Department's Institutional Service Eligibility website:
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/itudes/eligibility.html>.

Please note that through this process, the Department does not certify, nor designate, an institution as a Historically Black College or University, Tribally Controlled College or University, Minority-Serving Institution, or Hispanic-Serving Institution. The Department's determination that an institution is eligible is solely for the purpose of the institution's ability to apply for and receive grants under certain programs as discussed in this notice.

The EM is part of the Department's eligibility data system. The EM is a read-only worksheet that lists all potentially eligible postsecondary institutions, as determined by the Department using the data described above. If the entry for your institution in the EM shows that your institution is eligible to apply for a grant for a particular program, and you plan to apply for a grant in that program, you will not need to apply for eligibility or for a waiver through the process described in this notice. Rather, you may print out the eligibility letter directly. However, if the EM does not show that your institution is eligible for a program in which you plan to apply for a grant, you must submit an application as discussed in this

notice before the application deadline of [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PULICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

To check your institution's eligibility in the EM, go to <https://HEPIS.ed.gov>, and log into the system using your email address and password. If you are not sure whether you have an account in the system, click the "New User" button. If you have an account, it will walk you through setup. Note that it may take up to five business days to verify user identity and to complete new account setup, so please allow yourself enough time to complete the application. If the Grant Eligibility Application (GEA) system is open, click the link on your dashboard to check your institution's eligibility status by clicking the "View pre-Eligibility Information" button. Your institution's eligibility information will display.

If the EM does not show that your institution is eligible for a program, or if your institution does not appear in the eligibility system, or if you disagree with the eligibility determination reflected in the eligibility system, you can apply for a waiver or reconsideration through the process described in this notice. The application process is like previous years; you will choose the waiver option on the website at <https://HEPIS.ed.gov/> and submit your institution's application.

ENROLLMENT OF NEEDY STUDENTS: For programs under titles III and V (excluding the PBI programs), an institution is

considered to have an enrollment of needy students if: (1) at least 50 percent of its degree-seeking students received financial assistance under the Federal Pell Grant, FSEOG, FWS, or the Federal Perkins Loan programs; or (2) the percentage of its undergraduate degree-seeking students who were enrolled on at least a half-time basis and received Federal Pell Grants exceeded the median percentage of undergraduate degree students who were enrolled on at least a half-time basis and received Federal Pell Grants at comparable institutions that offer similar instruction.

To qualify under criterion 2, an institution's Federal Pell Grant percentage for base year 2018-2019 must be more than the median for its category of comparable institutions provided in the 2018-2019 Average Pell Grant and Core Expenses per FTE Student Table in this notice. If your institution qualifies under the first criterion, under which at least 50 percent of its degree-seeking students received financial assistance under one of several Federal student aid programs (the Federal Pell Grant, FSEOG, FWS, or the Federal Perkins Loan programs), but not the second criterion, under which an institution's Federal Pell Grant percentage for base year 2018-2019 must be more than the average for its category of comparable institutions provided in the 2018-2019 Average Pell Grant and Core Expenses per FTE Student Table in this notice, you must

submit an application including the requested data, which is not available in IPEDS.

For the definition of "Enrollment of Needy Students," for purposes of the Part A PBI program, see section 318(b)(2) of the HEA, and for purposes of the Part F PBI program, see section 371(c)(9) of the HEA.

CORE EXPENSES PER FTE STUDENT: For the Title III, Part A SIP; Part A ANNH; Part A PBI; Part A NASNTI; Part A AANAPISI; Title III, Part F HSI STEM and Articulation; Part F PBI; Part F ANNH; Part F NASNTI; Part F AANAPISI; Title V, Part A HSI; and Title V, Part B PPOHA programs, an institution should compare its base year 2018-2019 Core Expenses per FTE student to the average Core Expenses per FTE student for its category of comparable institutions in the base year 2018-2019 Average Pell Grant and Average Core Expenses per FTE Student Table in this notice. The institution meets this eligibility requirement under these programs if its Core Expenses for the 2018-2019 base year are less than the average for its category of comparable institutions.

Core Expenses are defined as the total expenses for the essential education activities of the institution. Core Expenses for public institutions reporting under the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) requirements include expenses for instruction, research, public service, academic support, student services, institutional support,

operation and maintenance of plant, depreciation, scholarships and fellowships, interest, and other operating and non-operating expenses. Core Expenses for institutions reporting under the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) standards (primarily private, not-for-profit, and for-profit) include expenses for instruction, research, public service, academic support, student services, institutional support, net grant aid to students, and other expenses. Core Expenses do not include Federal student aid for the purposes of eligibility. For both FASB and GASB institutions, Core Expenses do not include expenses for auxiliary enterprises (e.g., bookstores, dormitories), hospitals, and independent operations.

The following table identifies the relevant average Federal Pell Grant percentages for the base year 2018-2019 and the relevant Core Expenses per FTE student for the base year 2018-2019 for the four categories of comparable institutions:

Type of Institution	Base Year 2018-2019 Median Pell Grant Percentage	Base Year 2018-2019 Average Core Expenses per FTE Student
Two-year Public Institutions	33	\$14,679
Two-year Non-profit Private Institutions	57	\$17,529
Four-year Public Institutions	35	\$32,882
Four-year Non-profit Private Institutions	37	\$42,211

Waiver Information: Institutions that do not meet the needy student enrollment requirement or the Core Expenses per FTE requirement may apply to the Secretary for a waiver of these requirements, as described in sections 392 and 522 of the HEA, and the implementing regulations at 34 CFR 606.3(b), 606.4(c) and (d), 607.3(b), and 607.4(c) and (d).

Institutions requesting a waiver of the needy student enrollment requirement or the Core Expenses per FTE requirement must include in their application detailed evidence supporting the waiver request, as described in the instructions for completing the application.

The regulations governing the Secretary's authority to grant a waiver of the needy student requirement refers to "low-income" students or families, at 34 CFR 606.3(b)(2) and (3) and 607.3(b)(2) and (3). The regulations at 34 CFR 606.3(c) and 607.3(c) define "low-income" as an amount that

does not exceed 150 percent of the amount equal to the poverty level, as established by the U.S. Census Bureau.

For the purposes of this waiver provision, the following table sets forth the low-income levels (at 150 percent) for various sizes of families:

2019 ANNUAL LOW-INCOME LEVELS			
Size of Family Unit	Family Income for the 48 Contiguous States, DC, and Outlying Jurisdictions	Family Income for Alaska	Family Income for Hawaii
1	\$18,735	\$23,400	\$21,570
2	\$25,365	\$31,695	\$29,190
3	\$31,995	\$39,990	\$36,810
4	\$38,625	\$48,285	\$44,430
5	\$45,255	\$56,580	\$52,050
6	\$51,885	\$64,875	\$59,670
7	\$58,515	\$73,170	\$67,290
8	\$65,145	\$81,465	\$74,910

Note: We use the 2019 annual low-income levels because those are the amounts that apply to the family income reported by students enrolled for the fall 2018 semester. For family units with more than eight members, add the following amount for each additional family member: \$6,630 for the contiguous 48 States, the District of Columbia, and outlying jurisdictions; \$8,295 for Alaska; and \$7,620 for Hawaii.

The figures shown under family income represent amounts equal to 150 percent of the family income levels

established by the U.S. Census Bureau for determining poverty status. The poverty guidelines were published on February 1, 2019, in the *Federal Register* by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (84 FR 1167), with an effective date of January 11, 2019.

Information about "metropolitan statistical areas" referenced in 34 CFR 606.3(b)(4) and 607.3(b)(4) may be obtained at:

www.census.gov/prod/2010pubs/10smadb/appendixc.pdf and
www.census.gov/prod/2008pubs/07ccdb/appd.pdf.

Electronic Submission of Waiver Applications:

If your institution does not appear in the eligibility system as one that is eligible for the program under which you plan to apply for a grant, you must apply for a waiver of the eligibility requirements. To request a waiver, you must upload a narrative at: <https://HEPIS.ED.gov>.

Exception to the Electronic Submission Requirement: We discourage paper applications, but if electronic submission is not possible (e.g., you do not have access to the internet), you must provide a written statement that you intend to submit a paper application. Send this written statement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date (14 calendar days or, if the 14th calendar day before the application deadline date falls on a Federal holiday, the next business day following the Federal holiday).

If you mail your written statement to the Department, it must be postmarked no later than two weeks before the application deadline date. Please send this statement to one of the persons listed in the FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT section of this notice.

If you submit a paper application, you must mail your application, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address: U.S. Department of Education, Attention: Jason Cottrell, Ph.D., 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 2B127, Washington, DC 20202.

You must show proof of mailing consisting of one of the following:

- (1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark.
- (2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.
- (3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.
- (4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

If you mail your application through the U.S. Postal Service, we do not accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

- (1) A private metered postmark.
- (2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

Note: The U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, you should check with your local post office.

We will not consider applications postmarked after the application deadline date.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474. (d) The regulations for certain title III programs in 34 CFR part 607, and for the HSI program in 34 CFR part 606. (e) The notice of final requirements for the PPOHA program published in the *Federal Register* on July 27, 2010 (75 FR 44055).

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 79 apply to all applicants except federally recognized Indian Tribes.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to institutions only.

Note: There are no program-specific regulations for the Part A PBI, Part A NASNTI, and Part A AANAPISI programs or

any of the title III, part F programs. Also, there have been amendments to the HEA since the Department last issued regulations for the programs established under titles III and V of the statute. Accordingly, we encourage each potential applicant to read the applicable sections of the HEA to fully understand the eligibility requirements for the program for which they are applying.

II. Other Information

Accessible Format: On request to one of the program contact persons listed under FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT, individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format. The Department will provide the requestor with an accessible format that may include Rich Text Format (RTF) or text format (txt), a thumb drive, an MP3 file, braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc, or other accessible format.

Electronic Access to This Document: The official version of this document is the document published in the *Federal Register*. You may access the official edition of the *Federal Register* and the Code of Federal Regulations at www.govinfo.gov. At this site you can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the *Federal Register*, in text or Portable Document Format (PDF). To use PDF, you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at the site.

You may also access documents of the Department published in the *Federal Register* by using the article search feature at: www.federalregister.gov. Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

Tiwanda Burse,
*Deputy Assistant Secretary for Management & Planning, Office of Postsecondary Education.
Delegated authority to perform functions and duties of the Assistant Secretary for the Office of Postsecondary Education.*

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